

1701
S E R M O N

ON THE PRESENT SITUATION OF
AMERICAN AFFAIRS.

PREACHED IN CHRIST-CHURCH,
JUNE 23, 1775,

At the Request of the OFFICERS of the
THIRD BATTALION of the City of
Philadelphia, and District of *Southwark*.

By WILLIAM SMITH, D.D.
PROVOST OF THE COLLEGE IN THAT CITY.

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S E R M O N

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BY WILLIAM SMITH, D.D.

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PHILADELPHIA, *June 25, 1755.*

AT a Meeting of the Officers
of the 3d Battalion, of the
City of Philadelphia and District
of Southwark---*agreed*, That Dr.
SMITH be thank'd for his excel-
lent Sermon, preach'd at their
Request the 23d Inst. and that
he be requested to furnish a Copy
of the same for Publication ; as,
in their Opinion, it will promote
the Cause of Liberty and Virtue.

Signed by Order,

JOHN CADWALADER, Colonel.

Just published, (Price Six-pence)

RELIGIOUS

AND

CIVIL LIBERTY;

A THANKSGIVING

DISCOURSE.

Preached by the Recommendation of the
PROVINCIAL CONGRESS at *Roxbury*, in *New-England*.

By WILLIAM GORDON,

Minister of the Third Church at *Roxbury*.

P R E F A C E.

THE following Sermon was drawn up on a few days notice, and without any view to the press, at the request of some of the Author's worthy Friends, to whom he could refuse nothing of this kind. At their request, it is now likewise submitted to the Public, as it was preached, without varying or suppressing a single sentiment or material expression; and with the addition only of a few lines, and three or four explanatory notes.

THE Author considered that, although he was called to this office by a particular body, yet he was to address a great and mixt assembly of his fellow-citizens, and a number of the first characters in America, now met in consultation, at a most alarming crisis.

ANIMATED with the purest zeal for the mutual interests of Great-Britain and the Colonies; ardently panting for the return of those Halcyon-days

days of harmony, during which both countries so long flourished together, as the glory and wonder of the world; he thought it his duty, with the utmost impartiality, to attempt a state of the unhappy controversy that now rends the empire in pieces; and to shew, if peradventure he might be permitted to vouch for his fellow-citizens, so far as he has been conversant among them, that the idea of an independence upon the Parent-country, or the least licentious opposition to its just interests, is utterly foreign to their thoughts; that they contend only for the sanctity of charters and laws, together with the right of granting their own money; and that our rightful Sovereign has no where more loyal subjects, or more zealously attached to those principles of government, under which his family inherits the Throne.

THESE, with a few things which seemed necessary respecting the church at this time, are the topics handled in the following Sermon. If the principles

ples it contains are but thoroughly felt, the Reader will not regret that the limits of a single discourse would not allow a particular application of them. They will lead to their own application; or at least, that field is left open to succeeding Preachers.

UPON the whole, if the kind expectations of the Author's Friends can be in any degree answered; if what he has delivered shall tend "to promote the Cause of Liberty and Virtue;" and particularly, if it could find its way to the closets, or rather to the hearts, of the Great, and (after all the arguments they have heard from others) could in the least induce them to juster and more benevolent sentiments concerning their American brethren—he would account it among the happiest circumstances of his life.

ENOUGH has surely been attempted, by way of experiment, to be convinced that the people of this country know their rights, and will not consent to a
passive

passive surrender of them.—It is, now at least, time to pursue another mode, and to listen to some plan for averting the dreadful calamities which must attend a hostile prosecution of this unnatural contest. The author's wishes for the accomplishment of such a plan, have been so frequently expressed as to subject him perhaps to suspicions which he would not wish to merit, either here or elsewhere. But still, if he could see it take place, upon a just and permanent foundation, he would be content, if it were required, to sing his "*nunc dimittis*," and to take a final leave of earthly concerns.

SERMON,

S E R M O N, &c.

JOSHUA xxii. 22.

*The Lord God of Gods—the Lord God of Gods
—He knoweth, and Israel be shall know—if
it be in Rebellion, or in Transgression against
the Lord—Save us not this Day.*

TH E S E Words, my Brethren,
will lead us into a train of re-
flections, wholly suitable to the
design of our present meeting; and I must
beg your indulgence till I explain, as briefly
as possible, the solemn occasion on which
they were first delivered; hoping the appli-
cation, I may afterwards make of them,
may fully reward your attention.

B

T H E

THE two tribes of Reuben and of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, had chosen their inheritance, on the Eastern side of Jordan, opposite to the other tribes of Israel. And although they knew that this situation would deprive them of some privileges which remained with their brethren on the other side, and particularly that great privilege of having the place of the Altar and Tabernacle of God among them; yet, as the land of Canaan was judged too small for all the twelve tribes, they were contented with the possession they had chosen. And thus they spoke to Moses—

“ IT is a land of cattle, and thy servants
 “ have much cattle. Wherefore, if we have
 “ found grace in thy sight, let this land be
 “ given to us for a possession, and we will
 “ build sheepfolds here for our cattle, and
 “ cities for our *little ones*; and we ourselves
 “ will go ready armed before our brethren,
 “ the children of Israel—and will not return
 “ into our houses, until they have inherited
 “ every man his inheritance.”—

“ AND Moses said unto them—If you
 “ will do this thing, and will go all of you
 “ armed

" armed over Jordan before the Lord, un-
 " til he have driven out his enemies from
 " before him; and the land (of Canaan)
 " be subdued (for your brethren); then af-
 " terwards ye shall return, and this land (of
 " Gilead) shall be your possession before
 " the Lord.*"

THIS, then, was the great *original con-*
tract, under which these two tribes and a
 half were allowed to separate from the rest,
 and to dwell on the other side of Jordan.
 They were to assist their brethren in their
 necessary wars, and to continue under *one*
Government with them--even that of the great
 Jehovah himself--erecting no separate altar,
 but coming to perform their sacrifices at
 that *one Altar* of SHILOH, where the Lord
 had vouchsafed to promise his special pre-
 sence.

THOUGH this subjected them to incon-
 veniences, yet as Uniformity of Worship
 and the Nature of their *Theocracy* required
 it, they adhered faithfully to their contract.

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IN

* Numb. 32.

IN the fear of God, they bowed themselves at his altar, although not placed in their own land; and, in love to their brethren, they supported them in their wars, "till there stood not a man of all their enemies before them;" and at last, JOSHUA, their great leader, having no farther need of their assistance, gave them this noble testimony—That they had in all things obey'd his voice as their general, and faithfully performed all that they had promised to Moses the servant of God. Wherefore, he blessed them, and dismissed them to return to their own land "with much riches, and with cattle, and with silver, and with gold, and "with much raiment."

No sooner, therefore, had they entered their own country, than in the fullness of gratitude, on the banks of Jordan, at the common passage, over against Canaan, they built an *high* or great *Altar*, that it might remain an eternal monument of their being of one stock, and entitled to the same civil and religious privileges, with their brethren of other tribes.

BUT

BUT this their work of piety and love was directly misconstrued. The cry was immediately raised against them. The zealots of that day scrupled not to declare them *Rebels* against the living God, violators of his sacred laws and *Theocracy*, in setting up an altar against his holy altar; and therefore the whole congregations of the brother-tribes, that dwelt in Canaan, gathered themselves together, to go up to war against their own flesh and blood; in a blind transport of unrighteous zeal, purposing to extirpate them from the face of the earth, as enemies to God and the commonwealth of Israel!

IN that awful and important moment (and oh my God that the example could be copied among the brother-tribes of our Israel, in the Parent Land) I say, in that awful and important moment, some milder and more benevolent men there were, whose zeal did not so far transport them, but that, before they unsheath'd the sword to plunge it with unhallowed hand into the bowels of their brethren, they thought it justice first to enquire into the truth of the charge against them. And, for the glory of Israel, this peaceable and prudent council prevailed.

A MOST solemn embassy was prepared, at the head of which was a man of sacred character, and venerable authority, breathing the dictates of religion and humanity; PHINEAS the son of Eleazer the high Priest, accompanied with ten other Chiefs or Princes, one from each of the nine tribes as well as from the remaining half-tribe of Manasseh.

GREAT was the astonishment of the *Gileadites on receiving this embassy, and hearing the charge against them. But the power of conscious innocence is above all fear, and the language of an upright heart superior to all eloquence. By a solemn appeal to Heaven for the rectitude of their intentions, unpremeditated and vehement, in the words of my text, they disarmed their brethren of every suspicion.

"THE Lord God of Gods," say they (in the fervency of truth, repeating the invocation) "the Lord God of Gods"—He that made the heavens and the earth, who searcheth the
the

* The two tribes and a half are here briefly and generally denominated *Gileadites*, from the name of the land they had chosen.

{ 7 }

the hearts, and is acquainted with the most secret thoughts, of all men—"He knoweth, and all Israel shall know," by our unshaken constancy in the religion of our fathers—that this charge against us is utterly false.

THEN turning from their brethren, with unspeakable dignity of soul and clearness of conscience, they address the almighty Jehovah himself—

Oh thou sovereign Ruler of the universe—our God and our Fathers God—if it be in Rebellion or in transgression against thee, that we have raised this monument of our zeal for the commonwealth of Israel—"SAVE US NOT THIS DAY!" If the most distant thought has entered our hearts of erecting an *independent altar*; if we have sought, in one instance, to derogate from the glory of that sacred Altar which thou hast placed among our brethren beyond Jordan, as the common bond of union and worship among all the tribes of Israel—let not this day's sun descend upon us, till thou hast made us a monument of thine avenging justice, in the sight of the surrounding world!

AFTER this astonishing appeal to the great God of Heaven and Earth, they proceed to reason with their brethren; and tell them that, so far from intending a separation either in government or religion, this altar was built with a direct contrary purpose—"That it might be a WITNESS between us and you, and our generations after us; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, ye have no part in the Lord." We were afraid lest in some future age, when our posterity may cross Jordan to offer sacrifices in the place appointed, your posterity may thrust them from the altar, and tell them that because they live not in the land where the Lord's tabernacle dwelleth, they are none of his people, nor intitled to the Jewish privileges.

BUT while this altar stands, they shall always have an answer ready. They will be able to say—"Behold the pattern of the altar of the Lord which our fathers made." If our fathers had not been of the seed of Israel, they would not have fondly copied your customs and models. You would not have beheld in *Gilead*, an altar, in all things an imitation

imitation of the true altar of God; which is in Shiloh; except only that ours is an high "or great altar to see" from far. And this may convince you that it was not intended as an altar of sacrifice (for then it would have been but three cubits in height, as our law directs) but as a monumental altar, to instruct our generations for ever, that they are of the same pedigree with yourselves, and entitled to the same civil and religious privileges.

THIS noble defence wrought an immediate reconciliation among the discordant tribes. "The words, (when reported,) pleased the children of Israel—they blessed God together" for preventing the effusion of kindred blood, "and did not go up to destroy the land where their brethren, the children of Reuben† and Gad, dwelt."

THE whole History of the Bible cannot furnish a passage more instructive than this, to the members of a great empire, whose dreadful misfortune it is to have the evil Demon

† Though for brevity, the sacred text, in this and other places, only mentions *Reuben* and *Gad*, yet the half-tribe of *Manasseh* is also supposed to be included.

mon of civil or religious *discord* gone forth among them. And would to God, that the application I am now to make of it could be delivered in accents louder than Thunder, till they have pierced the ear of every Briton; and especially their ears who have meditated war and destruction against their brother-tribes of Reuben and Gad, in this our *American Gilead*. And let me add—would to God too that we, who this day consider ourselves in the place of those tribes, may, like them, be still able to lay our hands on our hearts in a solemn appeal to the God of Gods, for the rectitude of our intentions towards the *whole* commonwealth of our BRITISH ISRAEL. For, call'd to this sacred place, on this great occasion, I know it is your wish that I should stand superior to all *partial motives*, and be found alike unbiass'd by favor or by fear. And happy it is that the parallel now to be drawn, requires not the least sacrifice either of truth or virtue?

LIKE the tribes of Reuben and Gad, we have chosen our inheritance, in a land separated from that of our fathers and brethren, not indeed by a small River, but an immense Ocean. This inheritance we likewise hold
by

by a plain *original contract*, entitling us to all the natural and improveable advantages of our situation, and to a community of privileges with our brethren, in every civil and religious respect; except in this, that the throne or seat of Empire, that great altar at which the men of this world bow, was to remain among them.

REGARDLESS of this local inconvenience, uncanker'd by jealousy, undepress'd by fear, and cemented by mutual love and mutual benefits, we trod the path of glory with our brethren for an hundred years and more—enjoying a length of felicity scarce ever experienced by any other people. Mindful of the hands that protected us in our youth, and submitting to every just regulation for appropriating to them the benefit of our trade—our wealth was poured in upon them from ten thousand channels, widening as they flowed, and making their poor to sing, and industry to smile, through every corner of their land. And as often as dangers threaten'd, and the voice of the British Israel called our brethren to the field, we left them not alone, but shared their toils, and fought by their side, “till there

"there stood not a man of all their enemies before them." Nay, they themselves testified on our behalf, that in all things we not only did our part, but more than our part for the common Good; and they dismiss'd us home loaded with silver and with gold,* in recompence for our extraordinary services.

So far you see the parallel holds good. But what *high altars* have we built to alarm our British Israel? and why have the congregations of our brethren gathered themselves together against us? why do their embattled hosts already cover our plains? will they not examine our case, and listen to our plea?

"THE Lord God of Gods—he knows" and the whole surrounding world shall yet know, that whatever *American altars* we have built, far from intending to dishonour, have been raised with an express view to perpetuate the name and glory of that sacred altar, and seat of empire and liberty, which we left behind us, and wish to remain eternal, among our brethren, in the parent land!

ESTEEMING

* The parliamentary reimbursements for our exertions in the late war; similar to what Joshua gave the two tribes and a half on the close of his wars.

ESTEEMING our relation to them our greatest felicity; adoring the providence that gave us the same progenitors; glorying in this, that when the *new-world* was to be portioned out among the kingdoms of the *old*, the most important part of this continent fell to the sons of a protestant and free nation; desirous of worshipping for ever at the same altar with them; fond of their manners, even to excess; enthusiasts to that sacred plan of civil and religious happiness, for the preservation of which they have sacrificed from age to age; maintaining, and always ready to maintain, at the risk of every thing that is dear to us, the most unshaken fidelity to our common Sovereign, as the great center of our union, and guardian of our mutual rights;—I say, with these principles and these views, we thought it our duty, to build up American altars, or *constitutions*, as nearly as we could, upon the great British model.

HAVING never sold our birth-right, we considered ourselves entitled to the privileges of our father's house—"to enjoy peace, "liberty and safety"; to be governed, like our brethren, by our own laws, in all matters properly

properly affecting ourselves, and to offer up our own sacrifices at the altar of British empire; contending that a forced devotion is idolatry, and that no power on earth has a right to come in between us and a gracious sovereign, to measure forth our loyalty, or to grant our property, *without our consent.*

THESE are the principles we inherited from Britons themselves. Could we depart from them, we should be deemed bastards and not sons, aliens and not brethren.

THE altars therefore which we have built are not * high, or rival-altars to create jealousy, but humble monuments of our union and love; intended to bring millions yet unborn, from every corner of this vast continent, to bend at the great parent-altar of British

* In this respect, our plea is even stronger than that of the two tribes and a half. For, till an explanation was given, the *height* of their altar, like those of the heathen, who loved to sacrifice on lofty places, might create a suspicion of their " lapsing into idolatry; either intending to worship other Gods, or the God of Israel in an unlawful place and manner."

Bp. PATRICK.

British liberty; venerating the country from which they sprang, and pouring their gifts into her lap when their countless thousands shall far exceed hers.

IT was our wish that there should be an eternal "Witness between our brethren and us" that if at any future period, amid the shifting scenes of human interests and human affections, their children should say to our children—"Ye have no portion" in the birth-right of Britons, and so seek to push them from the common shrine of Freedom, when they come to pay their homage there; they might always have an answer ready—"Behold the pattern of the altar which our Fathers built," Behold your own religious and civil institutions, and then examine the frames of government and systems of laws raised by our fathers in every part of America! Could these have been such exact copies of your own, if they had not inherited the same spirit, and sprung from the same stock, with yourselves.

THUS far you see the parallel yet holds good, and I think cannot be called a perversion of my text; if you will allow that the supreme

preme power of an empire, whether theocratical, monarchical, or howsoever distributed, may be represented under the figure of *one* common *altar*, at which the just devotion of all the subjects is to be paid.

BUT it is said that we have of late departed from our former line of duty, and *refused* our homage at the great *altar* of British empire. And to this it has been replied, that the very *refusal* is the strongest evidence of our veneration for the *altar* itself. Nay, it is contended by those charged with this breach of devotion, that when in the shape of unconstitutional exactions, violated rights and mutilated charters, they were called to worship *idols*, instead of the true *divinity*, it was in a transport of holy jealousy, that they dashed them to pieces, or whelm'd them to the bottom of the ocean.

THIS is, in brief, the state of the argument on each side. And hence, at this dreadful moment, ancient friends and brethren stand prepared for events of the most tragic nature.

HERE

HERE the weight of my subject almost overcomes me; but think not that I am going to damp that noble ardor which at this instant glows in every bosom present. Nevertheless, as from an early acquaintance with many of you, I know that your principles are pure, and your humanity only equal'd by your transcendent love of your country; I am sure you will indulge the passing tear, which a preacher of the Gospel of Love must now shed over the scenes that lie before us.—Great and deep distress about to pervade every corner of our land! millions to be called from their peaceful labors by “the found of the trumpet, and the alarm of war! Garments roll'd in blood,” and even Victory itself only yielding an occasion to weep over friends and relatives slain! These are melancholy prospects; and therefore you will feel with me the difficulties I now labor under—forsaken by my text, and left to lament alone that, in the Parent-land, no PHINEAS has prevailed; no Embassy * of great or good men has been

C

raised,

* It is acknowledged with gratitude that many great and exalted characters have pleaded the cause of America; and, previous to all coercive measures, advised

raised, to stay the sword of destruction, to examine into the truth of our case, and save the effusion of kindred blood. I am left to lament that, in this sad instance, *Jewish* tenderness has put *Christian* benevolence to shame.

“OUR Brethren, the house of our Fathers, even they have called a multitude against us. Had an enemy thus reproach’d us, then perhaps we might have borne it. But it was you, Men our equals, our guides, our acquaintance, with whom we took sweet counsel and walked together into the house of God.” Or had it been for any essential benefit to the Commonwealth at large, we would have laid our hands on our mouths, and bowed obedience with our usual silence. But for DIGNITY and SUPREMACY! What are they when set in opposition to common utility,
common

vised an enquiry or hearing, similar to that for which *Phineas* was appointed. What is here lamented, and will be long lamented, is, that this council could not take place. If brethren could come together in such a temper as this, the issue could not fail to be for their mutual glory and mutual happiness.

common justice, and the whole faith and spirit of the Constitution? True Dignity is to govern Freemen, not Slaves; and true Supremacy is to excel in Doing Good.

It is time, and indeed more than time, for a great and enlightened people to make *names* bend to *things*, and *ideal honour* to *practical safety*: Precedents and indefinite claims are surely things too nugatory to convulse a mighty empire. Is there no wisdom, no great and liberal plan of policy to re-unite its members, as the sole bulwark of liberty and protestantism; rather than by their deadly strife to encrease the importance of those states that are foes to freedom, truth and humanity? To devise such a plan, and to behold British Colonies spreading over this immense Continent, rejoicing in the common rights of Freemen, and imitating the Parent State in every excellence—is more glory than to hold lawless dominion over all the nations on the face of the earth!

BUT I will weary you no longer with fruitless lamentations concerning things that *might be* done. The question now is—since they are not done, must we tamely surrender

any part of our birthright, or of that great charter of privileges, which we not only claim by inheritance, but by the express terms of our colonization? I say, *God forbid!* For here, in particular, I wish to speak so plain that neither my own principles, nor those of the church to which I belong, may be misunderstood.

ALTHOUGH, in the beginning of this great contest, we thought it not our duty to be forward in widening the breach, or spreading discontent; although it be our fervent desire to heal the wounds of the public, and to shew by our temper that we seek not to distress, but to give the parent-state an opportunity of saving themselves and saving us before it be too late; nevertheless, as we know that our civil and religious rights are linked together in one indissoluble bond, we neither have, nor seek to have, any interest separate from that of our country; nor can we advise a desertion of its cause. Religion and liberty must flourish or fall together in America. We pray that both may be perpetual.

A CONTINUED submission to violence is no tenet of our church. When her brightest

est luminaries, near a century past, were called to propagate the court-doctrine of a *dispensing Power, above Law*—did they treacherously cry—“*Peace, Peace,*” when there was no *Peace*! Did they not magnanimously set their foot upon the line of the constitution, and tell Majesty to its face that “they could not betray the public liberty,” and that the Monarch’s only safety consisted “in governing according to the laws?” Did not their example, and consequent sufferings, kindle a flame that illuminated the land, and introduced that noble system of public and personal liberty, secured by the revolution? Since that period, have not the avowed principles of our greatest divines been against raising the *Church* above the *State*; jealous of the national rights, resolute for the *Protestant* succession, favourable to the *reformed* religion, and desirous to maintain the faith of *Tolerance*? If exceptions have happened, let no society of christians stand answerable for the deviations, or corruptions, of individuals.

THE doctrine of absolute NON-RESISTANCE has been fully exploded among every virtuous people. The free-born soul revolts against it, and must have been long debased,

[and have drank in the last dregs of corruption before it can brook the idea "that a whole people injured may, in no case, recognize their trampled majesty." But to draw the line, and say where submission ends and resistance begins, is not the province of the ministers of Christ, who has given no * rule in this matter, but left it to the feelings and consciences of the injured. For when pressures and sufferings come, when the weight of power grows intolerable, a people will fly to the constitution for shelter;

* The author in a sermon first published 20 years ago, on 1 Peter ii. 17. delivered his sentiments fully on this point—in the following words, viz.—“It would be absurd to argue, as some have done, that the apostle here meant to enjoin a *continued submission* to violence—The love of mankind, and the fear of God, those very principles from which we trace the divine original of just government, will lead us, by all probable means, to resist every attempt to enslave the free-born soul, and oppose the righteous will of God by defeating the happiness of men. Resistance, however, is to be a last resource; and none but the majority of a whole people, can determine in what cases it is necessary. In the Scriptures, therefore, obedience is rightly inculcated in general terms. For a people may sometimes imagine grievances they do not feel, but will never miss to feel and complain of them where they really are, unless their minds have been gradually prepared for slavery by absurd tenets.”

ter; and, if able, will resume that power which they never surrendered, except so far as it might be exercised for the common safety. Pulpit-casuistry is too feeble to direct or controul here. God, in his own government of the world, never violates freedom; and his scriptures themselves would be disregarded, or considered as perverted, if brought to belie his voice, speaking in the hearts of men.

THE application of these principles, my brethren, is now easy and must be left to your own consciences and feelings. You are now engaged in one of the grandest struggles, to which freemen can be called. You are contending for what you conceive to be your constitutional rights, and for a final settlement of the terms upon which this country may be perpetually united to the Parent State.

Look back, therefore, with reverence look back, to the times of ancient virtue and renown. Look back to the mighty purposes which your fathers had in view, when they traversed a vast ocean, and planted this land. Recall to your minds their labors, their toils, their perseverance, and

let their divine spirit animate you in all your actions.

Look forward also to distant posterity. Figure to yourselves millions and millions to spring from your loins, who may be born *freemen* or *slaves*, as Heaven shall now approve or reject your counsels. Think that on you it may depend, whether this great country, in ages hence, shall be filled and adorned with a virtuous and enlightened people; enjoying LIBERTY and all its concomitant blessings, together with the RELIGION of JESUS, as it flows uncorrupted from his holy Oracles; or covered with a race of men more contemptible than the savages that roam the wilderness, because they once knew the "things which belonged to their" happiness and peace, but suffered them to "be hid from their eyes."

AND while you thus look *back* to the *past*, and *forward* to the future, fail not, I beseech you, to *look up* to "the God of
" Gods—the Rock of your Salvation. As
" the clay in the potter's hands," so are
the nations of the earth in the hands of
Him, the everlasting JEHOVAH! He lifteth up—and he casteth down—"He re-
" sisteth

“ lifteth the proud, and giveth grace to the
 “ humble--He will keep the feet of his saints
 “ ---the wicked shall be silent in darkness,
 “ and by strength shall no man prevail.”

THE bright prospects of the Gospel; a thorough veneration of the Saviour of the world; a conscientious obedience to his divine laws; faith in his promises; and the stedfast hope of immortal life through him; these only can support a man in all times of adversity as well as prosperity. You might more easily “ strike fire out of ice,” than stability or magnanimity out of crimes. But the good man, he who is at peace with the God of all peace, will know no fear but that of offending him, whose hand can cover the righteous “ so that he needs not fear the arrow that
 “ fleeth by day, nor the destruction that
 “ wasteth at noon-day; for a thousand shall
 “ fall beside him, and ten thousand at his
 “ right hand, but it shall not come nigh to
 “ him; for he shall give his angels charge
 “ over him to keep him in all his ways.”

ON the omnipotent God, therefore, thro’ his blessed Son, let your strong confidence be placed; but do not vainly expect that every day will be to you a day of prosperity

of triumph. The ways of providence lie through mazes, too intricate for human penetration. Mercies may often be held forth to us in the shape of sufferings; and the vicissitudes of our fortune in building up this American fabric of happiness and glory may be various and chequer'd.

BUT let not this discourage you. Yea rather let it animate you with a holy *fervor*—a divine *enthusiasm*—ever persuading yourselves that the cause of *virtue* and *Freedom* is the CAUSE of GOD upon earth; and that the whole theatre of human nature does not exhibit a more august spectacle than a number of Freemen, in dependence upon Heaven, mutually binding themselves to encounter every difficulty and danger in support of their native and constitutional rights, and for transmitting them holy and unviolated to their posterity.

It was this principle that inspired the heroes of ancient times; that raised their names to the summit of renown, and filled all succeeding ages with their unspotted praise. It is this principle too that must animate your conduct, if you wish your names to reach future generations, conspicuous in the roll
of

of glory; and so far as this principle leads you, be prepared to follow—whether to life or to death.

WHILE you profess yourselves contending for Liberty, let it be with the temper and dignity of freemen, undaunted and firm, but without wrath or vengeance, so far as grace may be obtained to assist the weakness of nature. Consider it as a happy circumstance, if such a struggle must have happened, that God hath been pleased to postpone it to a period, when our country is adorned with men of enlightened zeal; when the arts and sciences are planted among us to secure a succession of such men; when our morals are not far tainted by luxury, profusion or dissipation; when the principles that withstood oppression, in the brightest æra of the English history, are ours as it were by peculiar inheritance; and when we stand upon our own ground, with all that is dear around us, animating us to every patriotic exertion. Under such circumstances and upon such principles, what wonders, what achievements of true glory, have not been performed!

FOR

For my part, I have long been possessed with a strong and even enthusiastic persuasion, that Heaven has great and gracious purposes towards this continent, which no human power or human device shall be able finally to frustrate. Illiberal or mistaken plans of policy may distress us for a while, and perhaps sorely check our growth: but if we maintain our own virtue; if we cultivate the spirit of Liberty among our children; if we guard against the snares of luxury, venality and corruption; the GENIUS of AMERICA will still rise triumphant, and that with a power at last too mighty for opposition. This country *will be free*—nay, for ages to come, a chosen seat of *Freedom, Arts, and heavenly Knowledge*; which are now either drooping or dead in most countries of the old world.

To conclude: since the *strength* of all public bodies, under God, consists in their UNION; bear with each other's infirmities, and even varieties of sentiments, in things not essential to the main point. The tempers of men are cast in various moulds. Some are quick and *feelingly alive* in all their

their mental operations, especially those which relate to their country's weal, and are therefore ready to burst forth into flame upon every alarm. Others again, with intentions alike pure, and a clear unquenchable love of their country, too stedfast to be damped by the mists of prejudice, or worked up into conflagration by the rude blasts of passion, think it their duty to weigh consequences, and to deliberate fully upon the probable means of obtaining public ends. Both these kinds of men should bear with each other; for both are friends to their country.

ONE thing further let me add, that without *order* and just *subordination*, there can be no *union* in public bodies. However much you may be equals on other occasions, yet all this must cease in an united and associated capacity; and every individual is bound to keep the place and duty assigned him, by ties far more powerful over a man of virtue and honour, than all the other ties which human policy can contrive. It had been better never to have lifted a voice in your country's cause, than to betray

tray it by want of *Union*; or to leave worthy men, who have embarked their all for the common good, to suffer, or stand unassisted.

LASTLY, by every method in your power, and in every possible case, support the LAWS of your country. In a contest for liberty, think what a crime it would be, to suffer one *Freeman* to be insulted, or wantonly injured in his liberty, so far as by your means it may be prevented.

THUS animated and thus acting—we may then SING with the prophet—

“ FEAR not, O land! be glad and rejoice, for the Lord will do great things.
 “ Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field, for
 “ the pastures of the wilderness do spring—
 “ The tree beareth her fruit—the fig-tree
 “ and the vine yield their fruit.”

THUS animated and thus acting—we may likewise PRAY with the prophet—

O LORD

" O LORD be gracious unto us—we have
 " waited for thee. Be thou our arm every
 " morning, our salvation also in time of
 " trouble. Some trust in chariots and
 " some in horses, but we will remember the
 " name of the Lord our God—O thou
 " hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in
 " time of need—thou art in the midst of
 " us and we are called by thy name—
 " LEAVE US NOT. Give us *one* heart and
 " *one* way, that we may fear thee for ever,
 " for the good of ourselves and our chil-
 " dren after us—We looked for peace, but
 " no good came; and for a time of health,
 " but behold we are in trouble—Yet will
 " we trust in the Lord for ever; for in the
 " Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength—
 " He will yet bind up the broken-hearted,
 " and comfort those that mourn"—even
 so, oh our God do thou comfort and re-
 lieve them, that so the bones which thou
 hast broken may yet rejoice. Inspire us
 with a high and commanding sense of the
 value of our constitutional rights! may a
 spirit of wisdom and virtue be poured down
 upon us all; and may our Representatives,
 those

those who are delegated to *devise* and appointed to *execute* public measures, be directed to such, as thou in thy sovereign goodness shalt be pleased to render effectual for the salvation of a great empire, and reuniting all its members in one sacred bond of harmony and public happiness! Grant this, oh Father, for thy Son Jesus Christ's sake; to whom, with thee and the holy Spirit, one God, be Glory, Honour and Power now and for ever! A M E N.

THE END